Preservation of antiques of Adyar Library and Research Centre, Madras

860. SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE; SHRI KAILASH PATI MISH-RA. Will the, Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Adyar Library and Research Centre at Madras is reputed to be one of the best on Indology and Orientology in the world and has about 20: 000 invaluable palm-leaf ancient manuscripts in about 24 languages on a variety of subjects; and

(b) if so, what steps are being taken to preserve them safely for posterity and make them available for wide circulation for scholars all over the world?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI): (a) The Adyar Library and Research Centre is a non-Government voluntary organisation. The Library claims to possess an extensive collection of! books, periodicals and unpublished manuscripts. It is reported to have palm-leaf and paper manuscripts and transcripts numbering about 20, 000.

(b) To ensure better preservation, manuscripts are reported to be kept in air-conditioned rooms and as per techniques recomended by the National Archives of India. Further, the Government of India, under the scheme of financial assistance for preservation of manuscripts, has given grants during the last six years to this Library for preservation/ printing of manuscripts and also for purchase of equipment. Manuscripts etc. are made available for study to scholars according to the rules of the library.

Utilisation of Airbus 310 by AI

861. SHRi ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE; SHRI KAILASH PATI MISH-RA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item which appealed in the 'Hindustan Times dated 25th December, 1986 to the effect that traffic On short routes like Gulf and Africa, for which the newly acquired Air bus, 310 can be profitably used is shrinking and this airbus is not suited on Delhi-Moscow route during winter season; and

(b) whether these factors were over-looked while making a selection for the itirchase of the airbus, if so, the reascm therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRi JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) and (b) Due to restrictions under Extended Range twin engine opera-. tions and adverse weather conditions in Moscow and enroute, schedules of some of -Air India flighfs on the Delhi-Moscow route were disrupted. To ensure punctuality, flights to Moscow are now being operated with a Technical halt in Sharjah. Since January* 1987 there have been no delays to Moscow flights. A-310 aircraft, which were primarily acquired to replace the capacity loss due to the phasing. out of Boeing 707 aircraft, which had outlived their designed service life, are being operated on *the* India-Africa, India-Gulf and India-Singapore routes. For the future, operation to Hong Kong are planned.

Education for minorities

862. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN:

SHRI SHANKER SINH VA-GHELA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria according to which 40 districts had been named ag *Mua-lim-dominated' in the chapter o*